DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 094 100 CE 001 298

TITLE Career Education in the Elementary School: A Real Life Drama.
INSTITUTION Northern Illinois Univ., De Kalb. ABLE Model Program.
PUB DATE [72]
NOTE 15p.

EDRS PRICE MF-$0.75 HC-$1.50 PLUS POSTAGE
DESCRIPTORS *Career Education; Career Planning; *Elementary Grades; Human Resources; *Occupational Guidance; Program Development; Skill Development; *Teacher Role; Vocational Development

ABSTRACT

Developed by the Authentic Basic Life-Centered Education Model Program (ABLE), the teacher's guide to the development, production and direction of elementary school career education projects offers flexible guidelines rather than a "script" or kit. It suggests that major themes emphasize concern for values and careers as dimensions for human fulfillment. Three dimensions of an organizing center are suggested: accessibility of resources, mobility, and accomplishment. The development of inquiring skills can be accomplished through interviews and interaction between children and resource people. Another instrument suggested for guiding career development is a biographical information system that offers systematic cataloging of career development items, an efficient storage and retrieval system, and guidance catalog. Emphasizing the pivoted role of the teacher, the booklet acknowledges that total community involvement is necessary to a successful career education program. A list of materials available from the ABLE Model Program concludes the document. (MW)

ED 094100

Career Education in the Elementary School

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

A Real Life Drama

PERMISSION TO REPRODUCE THIS COPYRIGHTED MATERIAL HAS BEEN GRANTED BY
Walter Wernick
ABLE Program
TO ERIC AND ORGANIZATIONS OPERATING UNDER AGREEMENTS WITH THE NATIONAL INSTITUTE OF EDUCATION. FURTHER REPRODUCTION OUTSIDE THE ERIC SYSTEM REQUIRES PERMISSION OF THE COPYRIGHT OWNER.

U S DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH, EDUCATION & WELFARE
NATIONAL INSTITUTE OF EDUCATION
THIS DOCUMENT HAS BEEN REPRODUCED EXACTLY AS RECEIVED FROM THE PERSON OR ORGANIZATION ORIGINATING IT. POINTS OF VIEW OR OPINIONS STATED DO NOT NECESSARILY REPRESENT OFFICIAL NATIONAL INSTITUTE OF EDUCATION POSITION OR POLICY

"All the world's a stage
And all the men and women merely players.
They have their exits and their entrances.
And one man in his time plays many parts . . ."
—As You Like It II. vii

Ideation by **ABLE Model Program**, based upon the research and development activities of real people.

© by Able Model Program
(Authentic Basic Life-Centered Education)

Design by Publications Services.
Northern Illinois University

Production assisted by
Division of Vocational and Technical Education.
State of Illinois.
and Northern Illinois University

Stage Setting

CAREER EDUCATION IN THE ELEMENTARY SCHOOL is based upon the lives of people. It puts children into contact with adults in a wide variety of occupations. For this reason the real-life community becomes an authentic "Living Theater," a suitable stage for this contemporary educational drama.

The "Living Theater" provides direct experiences with the fundamental human activities of adults. Children learn by personal inquiry that people use energies in many life-centered endeavors, and for many types of careers—vocational pursuits, family life, community life, and the enjoyment of their own personal lifestyles. By bringing these dimensions of our human experience into proper focus, children are humanized by the play rather than transformed into unthinking and unfeeling slaves for the work ethic.

Our play also unfolds on the stage of human history. Centuries of experience in helping children live within cultural groups are in the background. Knowledge gained from these activities indicates that our young need many opportunities to develop personal meanings, to clarify values, and to learn to make decisions appropriate to their maturational levels.

Since career development must be personalized and staged within the realities of our current cultures, this play cannot be mass produced and put into a kit form. It has to be performed in a variety of settings over a period of many years.

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

Major Themes

The play draws upon the rich heritage of the past, yet each performance is distinctly future-oriented. *CAREER EDUCATION refocuses the past and the present upon the futures of growing human beings.*

People in this play deal with the future as a credible content area—one that has space, time, materials, and energies of its own. Each child's development in time can be imagined, resources can be organized, and teachers can plan activities with future careers in mind. The play directs attention to specific actions of teachers, children, parents, and resource people in the community. Each particular behavior is observed with regard to life-centered goals.

In keeping with this thematic emphasis upon the future, the end of the play is left open, rather than being preformulated. Conclusions are to be worked out in the minds and lives of the participants after the school productions of the play are over.

Concern for values is also a significant theme. Teachers can take their imaginations into the mysterious and wonderful realm of the child's developing self-image. They can direct activities within which children become more conscious of their own identities as human beings. They can point out the rhythmical interweaving of personal freedom and social responsibility in the lives of adults within the community.

Careers are treated as dimensions for human fulfillment, as vehicles by which individual values are expressed in the social value system. Thus, the schooling enterprise—through the planning and direction of its teachers—prepares children for the employment of values in an increasingly dynamic and complex world.

Characterization

The simplicity of the play's structure allows great flexibility in characterization. From among the many significant human activities available in every community, the teacher chooses according to the needs of his students. The roles to be included will depend mainly upon the purpose of the group's performance.

Since "characters" develop throughout the play, children's interests are sought as seeds for the formation of maturing attitudes and habits. However, interests are not the only stimuli for professional planning. The teacher's ability to make his decisions clear is also an important factor. *Each teacher acts so his direction of activities is visible because he knows he serves as a model of a working human being.*

Character development occurs through the acquisition of personal meanings—and these are usually obtained from direct experience with real people, including teachers, parents, and resource people in the community. *A focus upon occupational roles does not detract from the humanizing process. Work is a legitimate and necessary element of the adult character.*

Performing learners are encouraged to develop their own individualities as they explore adult roles, but unlike many other twentieth century educational offerings, the climax of this drama is not when self-awareness is proclaimed and an ego is formed. Human character is more than self for self's sake. Our play turns upon each individual's ability to build pride in himself and empathy for the living world about him. *Career education has an individual, social, and historical character.*

Production

Teachers directing *Career Education* productions must dare to enter the minds of their young proteges to prompt vivid expressions of self-awareness. These promptings will be timeless and seemingly fantastic, yet completely practical and necessary.

"You are a person."

"You are unique."

"Within broad limits you can develop along your own lines."

Responses may feature dramatic reactions of students to their teacher.

"Leave me alone."

"I'm a nobody."

"I never was anything—to my family, or to my teachers. And I like it that way."

Consider the creative interventions needed by a teacher to help that young person see a new image of his potentialities.

Other dramatic relationships may occur as students welcome the humanistic concerns of their teachers and allow the growing force of individuality to emerge. Learners may take up the challenge to clarify their own values, to learn to participate as a full personality in decision making, and to enter into new relationships with their own varied futures. When this happens, productions will move into wide and vibrant areas of creative endeavor.

The teacher's talent energizes personal as well as material resources and guides individual learning activities through them. Productions may be simple or daring, depending upon the teacher's willingness to deal with the unknown of each developing child.

Act I

"The Organizing Center: An Instrument for Planning"

The first act presents the concept of *the organizing center*. This approach starts with a teacher's idea, elaborates that idea through a step-by-step system of organization, and results in a workable teaching plan. The scenes in this act describe the three dimensions of an organizing center.

Scene one explores the *accessibility* of resources related to the organizing center idea. People as well as places are considered as resource possibilities. A file of community resources may facilitate the action of this initial scene.

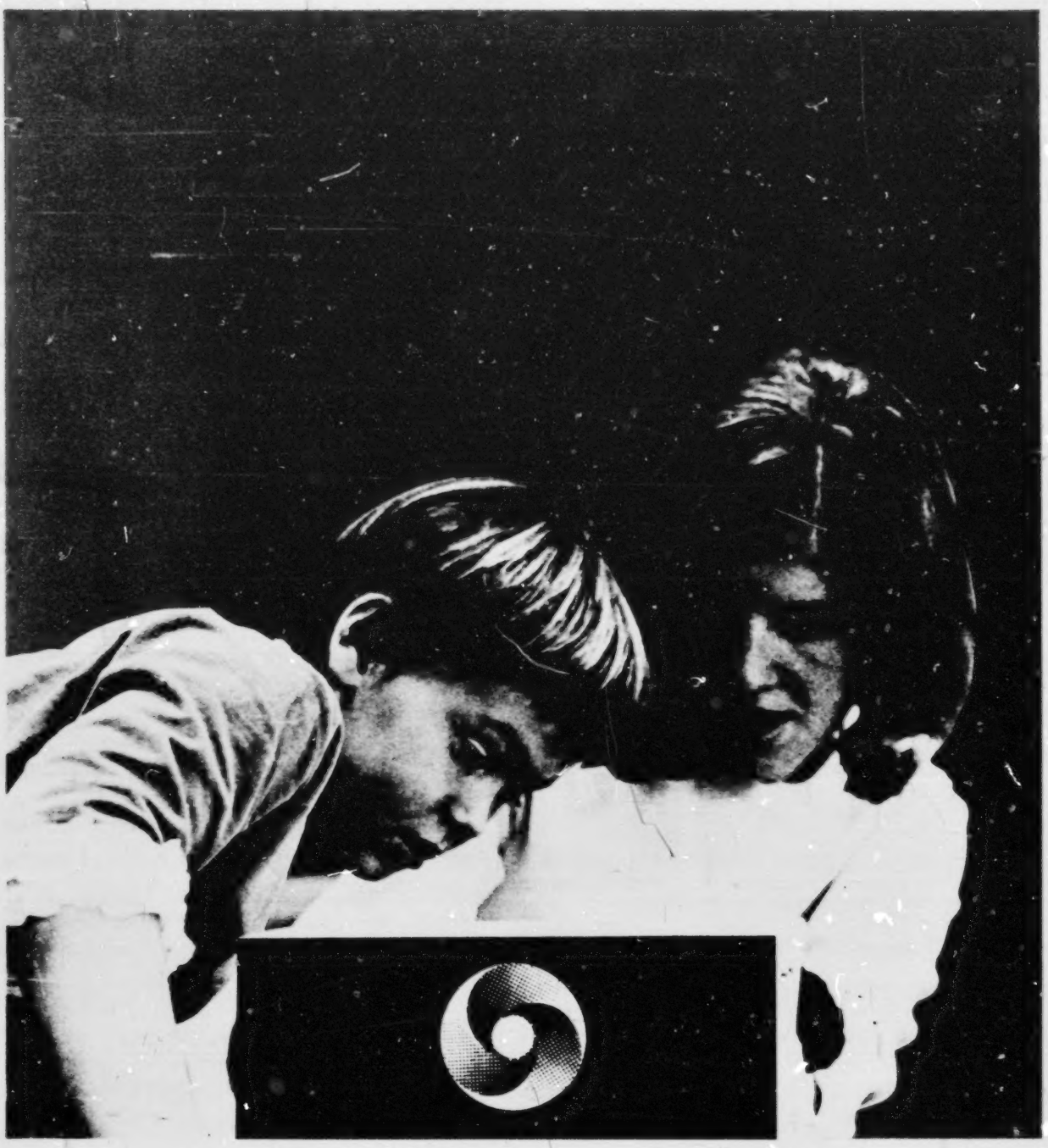
Scene two relates the activities of the person-in-the-occupation to the academic areas of the curriculum. This relating process is presented as *mobility* because of the lively interaction of ideas it generates. The treatment of content is not bound by the limits of a subject-schedule curriculum. Children and teachers "take an idea and see where it leads them."

Scene three portrays *accomplishment* in action. Learners produce visual and oral products appropriate to the central idea and to their learning levels. Evaluation is facilitated by attention to specific behavioral objectives.

When teachers organize around a person in a particular occupation, the academic areas of the curriculum blend naturally into and through the lives of people. People become the rationale, the vehicles, and the organizing centers for educational experiences. Children become more motivated as a result of instructional activities that involve active persons fully engaged in their work.

Through guided inquiry activities, children relate their school studies to life outside of school. Science, mathematics, social studies, and language arts are interwoven with easily accessible adult activities. Learning about the world of work contributes credibility to other areas of study, including studies of the future and human values.

A plan based upon the organizing center concept can be a useful instrument for the skillful management of teaching.



Act II

"Interviewing: A Basic Instrument for Inquiry"

The second act follows naturally from the teacher's concern for involvement of learners with relevant and significant content. In this act *inquiry skills are developed* so children can learn about careers first-hand from active adults.

The first scene presents *the concepts of interviewing*, particularly as a tool for learning by direct experience. Ways of exchanging ideas with others are explored. Reasons for utilizing the experience of people as sources of information are discussed and questions that are of interest to children are collected and organized.

Roleplaying is a special feature of the second scene. Children build self-confidence and get into character as they *practice interviewing skills* with each other. They learn to ask a variety of questions, to respond to cues, and to use the tape recorder.

The third scene initiates *interaction with resource people* and provides additional practice through interviews with familiar school personnel or friendly parents. Students visit activity centers and work stations outside the school and are led into more complex realms of interpersonal communication.

In this act children learn how to inquire from primary sources—beginning with the people in their own neighborhoods. Then they learn to interact with other resource people. This provision for direct experience goes beyond theatre-in-the-round; it puts the learners firmly in touch with the realities of adult lives.

This act brings feeling as well as intellectual development into the instructional program. Human development is encouraged through planned contacts with human forms. Those who are constantly watching for the "difference" which educational experiences make in the behaviors of learners should note that visible activities—such as interviews—facilitate evaluation of behavioral changes.

Act III

"The Biographical Information System: An Instrument for Guiding Career Development"

Act III presents *a biographical information system* which provides a review of events throughout the play. This recapitulation serves to refocus the previous two acts in terms of:

1) helping the teacher plan an appropriate program of studies for each child;
2) aiding each child in creating a healthy self-image; and
3) assisting counselors, children, and parents with realistic career development goals.

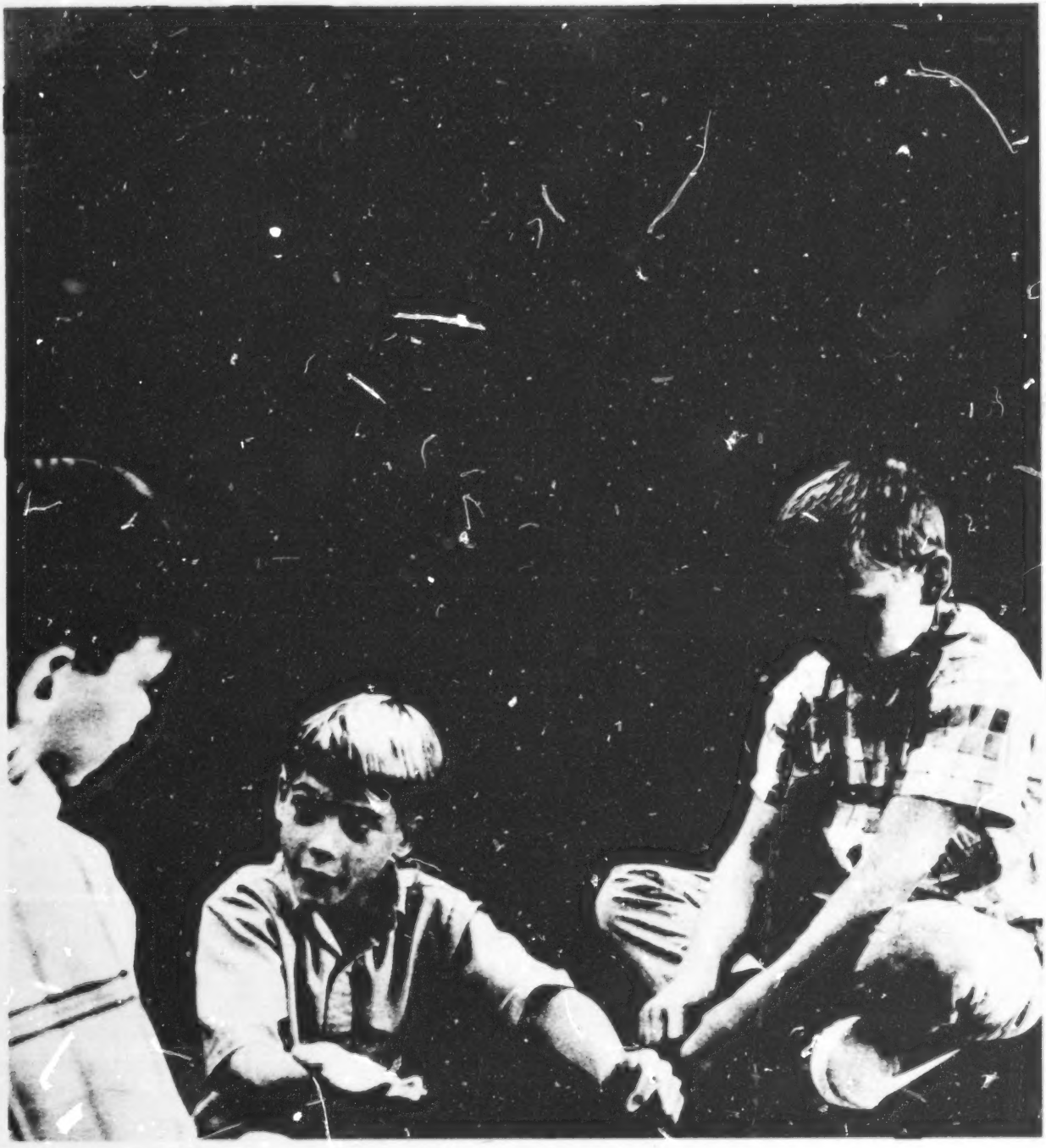
In a very real sense, act three leads us right back to the spiralling dimensions of acts one and two.

Scene one presents a method for *systematic cataloging of career development items*. Anecdotal comments, samples of work, and self-evaluations are especially highlighted. A personalized emphasis is evident throughout.

Scene two categorizes information contained in the cumulative, comprehensive catalog. The quantity of information about developing learners is almost beyond belief and demands a concise and efficient *storage and retrieval system*. This scene shows how the personal meanings of individuals are retained in such a system.

Scene three involves analysis of categories, presented in a form that makes the catalog *useful for guidance* within individual lives—for planning future instructional opportunities as well as for choosing career opportunities.

As information about each child's interests, attitudes, and abilities is obtained, the everyday work of the school system ties increasingly closer to its product—*the educated person*. In turn, the "educated learning person" acts to move the schooling system closer to his needs.



Behind the Scenes

The developers of *CAREER EDUCATION IN THE ELEMENTARY SCHOOL* identified the following concerns:

> *What skills will a child need to find out who he is, what others like him were in the past, and what he may become?*
>
> *What content will help a child discover his latent inclinations, uncover his abilities, know his interests, and clarify his purposes?*
>
> *What opportunities will be planned for a child to test out his developing self-image—without penalty, without fear of destroying parts of himself, and with full knowledge that what he is doing is what is expected of him in school?*

Scripts based upon these concerns were acted out in a variety of educational environments. Live performances of our contemporary educational drama enabled participants to learn to play their parts and furnished developers of career education programs with basic components of the play's structure.

Premiere Performance

Although separate components have been worked out by thoughtful casts in many theaters of action, there is a great demand for a complete and comprehensive American spectacular to open immediately. Towards this end, what can our performing teachers do?

Teachers can increase the utilization of educational resources by arranging for direct exchanges between children and adults.

Teachers can improve their instruction of basic skills by employing a person-in-the-occupation as an organizing center for planning.

Teachers can arrange a more significant base for sensory experiencing by facilitating the sharing of visual and oral accomplishments in a variety of social settings.

Teachers can develop personal meanings of students by incorporating the teaching of inquiry and value clarification skills within their regular program of studies.

Teachers can create more life-centered activities for individual students by learning about their interests, abilities, and previous educational experiences, and then focusing efforts upon career development goals.

CAREER EDUCATION IN THE ELEMENTARY SCHOOL will emerge from the imaginations of our teachers, but a unitary production of this play needs more than outstanding performances from professional educators. The real-life of this classical drama requires the active participation of all those playing a part in the education of our young. Administrators, guidance workers, school board members, parents, and many adults in the community must work with teachers to bring life to this play.

Reviews

We've used the World of Work as an Organizing Center for the Curriculum of the Elementary School and it worked well for us.

David Yeck, Cluster teacher, Laboratory School

. . . new opportunities are provided for skill building and personal development in social and academic behavior. . . . students have a greater awareness of community and larger world dependency of people upon each other. . . . adds dimension to the teacher's "role" through working with other adults in other fields.

Doris Miller, 2nd Grade teacher

When I can clearly identify my own instructional objectives and goals, the children know what I expect of them and seem to work more independently. The organizing center approach has helped me plan more effectively.

Martha Owens, 1st Grade teacher

One teacher may find her way of using the program entirely different than another teacher at the same grade level . . . . it allows a teacher to individualize herself as well as her students with regard to instruction.

Sandra Anderson, 2nd Grade teacher

The World of Work is people. . . . people to interview and talk to about their jobs. People ask if I like the World of Work and I say "yes". My mother and father like it, too.

Gail Johnson, 5th Grade student

It's strange when you first try it . . . . You're curious about what it is, and you want to learn. When you start to learn, it's hard to quit.

Marty Shelton, 5th Grade student

I like school better than when we didn't have it. We do more things than we used to.

Kelly Smith, 5th Grade student

All children experience success. The roles of the pupil and the teacher have changed. Pupils have freedom of choice. The teacher's role is supportive bringing real life experiences into the classroom.

Sandy Arlt and Jayne Backman, 3rd Grade team

In an item analysis of the responses from parents, the results were 98% positive!

Judy White, 5th Grade teacher

The Career Education Project has been one of the most significant steps Peoria has taken for many years to improve the school program . . . . I would recommend, without reservation, that other school districts try a similar approach.

Claude Norcross, Superintendent

. . . does not require large amounts of money for equipment or materials. It does not require extensive in-service training for teachers. Those who have a desire to use the ABLE Model Program and have the imagination and creativity to put kids in learning situations can do it.

Howard Hawkinson, Principal

OTHER MEDIA PRODUCTIONS FROM ABLE MODEL PROGRAM

(Not all materials are in print)

IMPLEMENTING CAREER EDUCATION THROUGH ABLE MODEL PROGRAM

(A brief introductory booklet, 20 pgs.)

FIRST STEPS: Planning a Career Development Activity in Your Classroom

(Practical suggestions for getting started, 60 pgs.)

CAREER EDUCATION ACTIVITIES THROUGH WORLD OF WORK RESOURCES

(A resource guide for teachers and educational workers, 160 pgs.)

INTRODUCING CAREER EDUCATION TO TEACHERS: A Handbook for Consultants, Workshop Leaders and Teacher Educators

(Looseleaf, 100 pgs.)

THE LEARNING CENTER: A Key Resource for Career Education

(Mimeographed, 9 pgs.)

THE ORGANIZING CENTER: An Instrument For Implementing Life-Centered Education

(Mimeographed, 32 pgs.)

Order Films Directly from NIU Film Library, N.I.U. 815 753-0171

PEOPLE HAVE CAREERS: A Primary Teacher Integrates Career Development in Basic Areas of the Curriculum

(An 11 minute, 16 mm sound/color film)

CAREER DEVELOPMENT THROUGH LIFE-CENTERED ACTIVITIES

(A 15 minute, 16 mm sound/color film)

For more information
contact: Dr. Walter Wernick, Director

ABLE MODEL PROGRAM
Northern Illinois University
DeKalb, Illinois 60115

(815 753-1959)